

To: Hutchinson, Marcella[Hutchinson.Marcella@epa.gov]
From: Miullo, Nat
Sent: Mon 8/17/2015 3:23:07 PM
Subject: RE: Editorial: The blame game at Gold King

Excellent dialogue.

Hope this gets equal consideration with other perspectives.

From: Hutchinson, Marcella
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2015 8:29 AM
To: Russell, Carol; Miullo, Nat
Subject: FW: Editorial: The blame game at Gold King

FYI – Local (Longmont) paper

From: Loretta Lohman [<mailto:lorettalohman@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, August 14, 2015 1:17 PM
To: west-slope@googlegroups.com; souTHplatte@googlegroups.com;
arkriver@googlegroups.com; coriv@googlegroups.com
Subject: Editorial: The blame game at Gold King

TIMES-CALL

Editorial: The blame game at Gold King

Posted: 08/13/2015 09:28:11 PM MDT | Updated: about 15 hours ago

For all the talk about the Environmental Protection Agency's role in the Gold King Mine wastewater spill, one would think the federal agency was mining precious metals, profiting off of minerals on public land and then walking away from the damage.

No, that's what the old owners of mines in the area did.

The EPA, through a contractor, was trying to clean up the mess, and in the process, allowed the 3 million gallons of wastewater that had accumulated to escape from holding ponds and into Cement Creek, then into the Animas River. The wastewater, laden with heavy metals and iron, turned the river a bright orange for several days and prompted farmers, ranchers and municipal water users to shut down their use of the river. The closure continues as the EPA monitors the pollution levels.

Yes, the EPA is culpable for the consequences of the river closure in the past week, and the damage the river closure has caused.

However, the toxic source of the water, the mines in the San Juan Mountains, are only now being addressed because of the work of the federal agency. Toxic effluent not only is being produced by the Gold King mine but by many others, and the fish populations in the upper creeks already have paid the price. If not the EPA to address those issues, who would? The mine owners? State and local governments? None has the resources.

The issue of neglected mines and their waste is one facing the western United States. If there is a silver lining from the accident, it's that leaders will have the conversation about the future of those mines.

Demagoguery will not solve the problem. It will only push necessary people away from the process.

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Loretta Lohman, PhD
Lohman and Associates
3375 W Aqueduct Ave
Littleton, CO 80123-2903
303-549-3063
lorettalohman@gmail.com